

Curious Phenomina

by aura218

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Summary: Nighttime, together, in front of the boob tube

Curious Phenomina

NOTE: This was written after "Triangle" and contains a tiny spoiler.

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"Curious Phenomina"

I'm not sure how it really began. It probably had been a long time coming, really. The evening itself, however, started when Mulder arrived at my door in a huff.

He was in one of his moods where he is sure that his life's work is hopeless because all the influential powers at the bureau are against him. He's really a pill when he gets like this. I let him rant for a while because stopping him would be trying to stop the 5:15 to Chicago with a feather. I sympathized with him-- but it is hard to produce a heartfelt response when I hear this speech every other week. Anyway, he was almost tolerable if I could half listen to him and half continue to watch the news.

He hit all the usual grievances: Cancer Man was out to get him; we had been betrayed by our colleagues. He had new fodder this time, of course: we had been transferred again. I must admit, though, I did agree with him. This transfer seemed to be for good.

Finally, when he was getting close to whining and I was almost ready to send him home, he seemed to get a clue. As spontaneously as he started, he ceased his volly of complaints and said, in true blase Mulder tone, "So, how's your day been?"

Keeping an equally blank visage, I answered that it had been "Nothing special." Morning coffee, paperwork, investigate threat to national security, lunch, paperwork, then call it a day.

The threat to national security comment seemed to perk him up.

"You got a security assignment?"

If I weren't his best friend, he may have actually sounded jealous.

"Hackers," I replied, and I could see his shoulders sloop.

"Oh."

He stood there a minute, not sure what to do with himself. Having not moved from my position in front of the t.v., I motioned for him to have a seat in the empty space next to me.

"Anything interesting?" he asked, meaning on the news.

"Not really," I replied as he sank down into the cushion next to me. I ignored the silent explanation which hung on the end of the statement. The news had been more interesting when catching a warped report of one of our X file projects had been a possibility.

We watched the news silently, simply enjoying each other's company, and continued to watch the next program. It was at that point when I noticed that somehow the distance between our bodies had decreased.

That was somewhat odd; we were almost hip-to-hip. Had he scooched or had I? I honestly couldn't remember. I also noticed that our feet had somehow set themselves upon my coffee table. While I was still pondering these strange occurrences, Mulder raised the arm closest to me and laid it to rest around my shoulders.

This was definately odd. My first reaction was utter surprise, so much so that I almost said something-- but didn't.

It wasn't an unpleasant position to be in, and he didn't seem to mind. And I *had* just thought of him as my best friend, hadn't I? The friends on Friends were always in each other's arms (not that I ever watched that show, mind you) so it must be okay.

It was practical, I decided, simply practical. It was chilly in the room, and when one places one 98.6 degree body next to another 98.6 degree body, they make one, large 197.2 degree body. So I relaxed and leaned against him. And it was no sin if I curled my legs up so they were practically in his lap, was it? If God wanted us to have legs that stuck straight out all the time, he wouldn't have given us knees, right? (Hmmm . . . his hand resting on my thigh was a variable that didn't quite fit into my rationalization . . . but every theory has its ill-fitting component.)

So we watched the inane sitcom like that for a while, carrying on only minimal conversation, and my mind began to wander. As the memories of our last escapade lulled in my brain, I suddenly felt compelled to tell him something very important.

"Mulder?"

"Hmm?"

Pause. "I love you too."

It took him seconds to answer, but it felt like aeons to me. What if he took it the wrong way? The jittery feeling in my stomach was causing my "friends" hypothesis to stagger.

"I know."

I know. What a typically Mulder thing to say. His response fit into my precious theory, so I was satisfied. I rested my head on his shoulder and I must have dozed off, because the next thing I was aware of was running in hot pursuit of something, but I didn't know what

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When I awoke I sensed emptiness beside me but I couldn't identify what I was missing. A minute later I became fully conscious when Mulder sat back down next to me. He must have gotten up to use the bathroom or something.

"Did I wake you?" he asked.

My eyes fluttered open and I answered, "No." It seemed impolite to answer honestly. I re-arranged myself the way I had been before he got up, with my legs curled up like a cat and my head on his shoulder and fully intended to continue my nap. Then he spoke.

"It's getting late."

"Mmf? What time is it?"

"1:30"

"Oh. That is kind of late." I still didn't open my eyes.

"I should get going," he continued. "It's been a long day; I shouldn't drive home at two a.m. when I'm half asleep."

I opened my eyes then and looked directly into his. Our faces were in point-blank range.

"So don't go."

He blinked. "Don't go?"

I sat up straight. "I've got a double bed," I explained.

He was really confused now, but I noticed a catch of hope in his eye. "Uh-huh. . . ." For once he didn't reply with inuendo. I felt a blush warm my face, but I gathered my composure and continued.

"Mulder, how old are you?"

Not sure where the conversation was going, Mulder merely replied, "Thirty-seven."

"Okay, well, if you add our ages, it makes seventy." A lilt in my

voice said that I didn't care if he took the time to figure out what seventy minus thirty-seven equal, but make a comment and he'd find himself on the opposite side of my front door.

"Yeah. . . ."

"And seventy is certainly an age where two friends can sleep in the same bed and not have a hormone fest, right?"

"I guess so." He seemed to be catching on.

"And if you subtract our ages, it's about six, and six is an age when best friends often have sleepovers, correct?"

"I think I remember something like that." A smile crossed his face, causing his eyes to sparkle with amusement.

"Then, I repeat, Mulder: don't go. Sleep with me."

His smile broadened to a grin. "I like your logic, Scully."

It took him long enough! I thought as we headed toward the bedroom, hand in hand.

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NOTES: I'd like to acknowledge my beta reader, Cynthia Douglas, for her invaluable assistance.

I'd love to hear what you think! My addy is Annegirl111@juno.com. Flames will be used for target practice.

Disclaimer: "The X Files", Mulder, Scully, and Cancer Man are used without permission from 1013, Chris Carter, Fox, and some other people too, I think. "Curious Phenomina" is mine all mine.

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